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26th Congress,
1st Session.

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MEMORIAL

OF

HALL J. KELLEY,

PRAYING

A grant of land in the Oregon Territory for the purpose of establishing a colony thereon.

DECEMBER 27, 1839.

Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

To the honorable Senate of the United States:

Respectfully represents your petitioner, Hall J. Kelley, that he is a native citizen of these United States, and now resides in Massachusetts:—that for more than twenty years he has been earnestly endeavoring by various means to awaken the public mind and direct the thoughts of Government to the formation, protection, and encouragement of settlements in the Oregon Territory: that he has at divers times memorialized Congress on this subject; that he has also diligently collected from all quarters, whether books or living authority, information in regard to that Territory; which information he has, by means of the press, and at great cost and trouble, laid before the public; that in pursuing his design of extending the blessings of Christian knowledge, republican institutions, and the various arts of life to our Pacific coast, he has spent the flower of his age, and the whole of his fortune, and has exposed himself to perils and hardships, dangers and calumnies, disease and penury; that about the year 1828, for the purpose of establishing a colony in Oregon, he set on foot an enterprise in which many hundreds of his fellow citizens engaged to participate—but which, on the very eve of its success, was suspended in consequence of the false representations circulated through the press concerning the Oregon Territory, the facility of travelling thither, and the character and purpose of your petitioner; that being thus checked in his designs, your petitioner determined to visit and explore the Oregon Territory, and give to the world the result of his own observation; that he accordingly set forward on his journey with a few associates, and a considerable amount of property, in the year 1832, for the western coast; that during his journeying thither, he was plundered, deserted by his comrades, and left to his own unaided resources, so that he arrived in Oregon almost destitute of property and broken down in health; that he remained a considerable period in that country, much embarrassed in his movements by the officials and subordinates of the Hudson Bay company, as well as by bodily infirmities, produced by exposure and fatigue; yet, nevertheless, collecting a large mass

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of various information for the benefit of the world; that he was compelled at last by ill health and ill treatment to return to Massachusetts, where he has ever since been endeavoring to communicate the results of his travel to the public, although his movements have been cramped by the want of health and funds, particularly by the almost entire loss of his eye-sight.

Your petitioner would further state that many of the individuals whose attention had been directed by his exertions towards Oregon, and who originally enlisted in his scheme of emigration, have subsequently settled in that Territory, and that your petitioner has thus been the author of the first permanent American settlements west of the Rocky mountains.

Such is a brief sketch of what your petitioner has attempted, and accomplished, done, sacrificed, and suffered in endeavoring to promote the welfare of his country and the advancement of civilization.

Having thus sacrificed his time, property, and health, being now reduced to poverty, and yet remaining desirous of carrying the institutions of his country to the Oregon, he most earnestly and respectfully prays of this honorable body, the grant of so much land in that Territory as may enable him at once to establish a prosperous colony, and regain some portion of the property which he has expended as before described.

Referring to the documents which accompany this petition for more perfect information in regard to the facts therein stated, your petitioner prays, &c.

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